

NAME: Mitsumori, Nisuke DATE OF BIRTH: 2/15/1888 PLACE OF BIRTH: Yamanashi # 32
Age: 84 Sex: M Marital Status: _____ Education: 8 yrs; up to Middle school in
Japan. College in U. S. (Graduated in 1936)

PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 1905 Age: 17 M.S. S Port of entry: San Fran.
*Occupation/s: 1. Type Setter 2. School Boy 3. Cook on ship * ACCOUNTANT
Place of residence: 1. San Francisco, Ca 2. Los Angeles, Ca. 3. Long Beach, Ca.
Religious affiliation: Christian Church 4. Fresno, Cal. 5. Pasadena, Ca.
Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:

*4. Farmer 5. Church Secretary 6. Gardener 7. Soldier
Name of assembly center: ? 8. Went back to College
Name of relocation center: Manzanar, Ca. 9. Accountant
Dispensation of property: _____ Names of bank/s: _____
Jobs held in camp: 1. _____ 2. _____
Jobs held outside of camp: Taught Japanese at University of Michigan
Left camp to go to: Michigan (In 1942)

POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast: 1947
Address/es: 1. Japan (2 yrs) 2. Pasadena, California
3. _____
Religious affiliation: Christian Church (Pasadena Church)
Activities: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: _____

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 4/19/72 Place: Pasadena, Ca.

Translator: Michio Yamaguchi

Name: Nisuke Mitsumori

Birth Date: Feb. 15, 1888

Birth Place: Yamaguchi Ken

When did he come to the US: 1905

At what age did he come to the USA: 17 years old

Major Occupation: Accountant

Relocation Camp: Manzanar, California

Interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe

Interview Date: Ap. 19, 1972

Place of Interview: Pasadena, California

Translator: Michiyo Yamaguchi

Typist: Michiyo Yamaguchi

Name: MR. NISUKE MITSUMORI

Born: February 15, 1888

Interview by: Heihachiro Takarabe

Date of Interview: April 19, 1972

Q: I like to ask you a variety of questions today.

A: I'd be happy to cooperate with you for anything I can.

Q: First of all, would you tell me your name?

A: My name is Mitsumori Nisuke in Japanese way, but in English it should be Nisuke Mitsumori.

Q: What are the Chinese characters for your name Nisuke? Are they jin (hito) and tasukeru?

A: Yes, the first part is hito but the character for suke is not tasukeru but ho.

Q: Would you write it for me?

A: Sure.

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in Yamanashi prefecture.

Q: When were you born?

A: I was born on February 15, 1888. In Japanese way I was born in the twenty-first year of Meiji.

Q: Would you tell me about your family and your father's occupation?

A: My family did farming for generations.

Q: What was the size of the land your family had?

A: It was large enough for my father to do farming. Sometimes he used somebody's field, too.

Q: Can't you remember the size of it?

A: Let's see. I think it was about seven or eight cho, which must be about two and a half acre.

Q: Do you remember what kind of a person your father was?

A: He was a serious country farmer.

Q: Are you the oldest son?

A: No, I am the second one. I have an older brother who is six years older than I. I was born when he was six years old.

Q: What kind of a person was your mother?

A: She was a daughter of a farmer in the countryside. I would say she was a typical ordinary peasant's wife. She was also a very stern mother and used to spank us immediately after we did something wrong.

Q: What is your educational background in Japan?

A: In those days there were four years in elementary school and another four years for middle school. I finished those eight years of schooling. Most of them did not go as far as I did. When I started going to school, there were about 30 students in each class. However, by the time I started middle school, there were only eight or so students left in the class.

Q: What kind of subjects did you study?

A: We learned everything that was required in those days.

Q: What were they?

A: Japanese, arithmetic, calligraphy, reading, ethics, art, science, history, and geography. We had to study everything required in middle school in those days. However, since I liked to study very much, I was not satisfied with what we studied during the

day and attended a night school. There I learned Chinese history and Chinese classics. I went to a scholar of Chinese classics, famous in the village and he taught me these subjects.

Q: You must have really liked to study.

A: Yes, I did like to study. So, what we learned in school was rather easy for me.

Q: Do you remember about your teachers? What kind of teachers did you have in elementary and higher schools?

A: Sure, I do remember about my teachers. I particularly remember four teachers. Mr. Higuchi was a teacher in elementary school, who was a priest and a very serious person. Mr. Kaneko was our principal. After Mr. Kaneko left, Mr. Shinohara came. He showed an interest in me as a student. According to the custom of our school, an honor prize was not given to any student when they graduated. Although they gave an honor prize up to the third year in middle school, they did not honor any fourth year graduating student with the idea that everyone should be equal. However, this teacher (Mr. Shinohara) decided to give me an honor prize because he thought that I was extraordinary and would become a useful person in the future. When I went back to Japan to visit last October, my nephew found that certificate of my honorary prize, which my brother had kept somewhere in the house and told me what a great person I was. I guess I studied hard during my school days and my teacher recognized it, too.

Q: What kind of things do you remember most in your life in Japan?

A: When I was in Japan?

Q: Yes, when you were little.

A: I cannot remember anything in particular when I was little.

Q: How about after you were grown up?

A: I'll talk about the days after I graduated from school. Since my family was poor in those days, I could not go on to a higher school which is equivalent to senior high school today, after I finished middle school. There was only one person in the village who went to higher school. It was rather costly to go to higher school. However, I wanted to go to normal school since it was prefectural and the tuition was free. But a person had to be eighteen years old to go to normal school. Thus I was preparing myself to go to normal school. However, the war between Japan and Russia started in the meantime. Since I did not like to be drafted, I decided to come to the United States, giving up the idea of going to normal school. It was when I was seventeen years old. Even to get a passport to come to the United States one had to be eighteen years old. So, I waited and applied for it as soon as I became eighteen. Thus, I was in Japan only until I became eighteen. I don't seem to remember anything in particular of my life in Japan.

Q: What was the religion of your family?

A: My family was a Buddhist. Although when my mother was sick, a Tenrikyō priest came and prayed for us. The priest suggested that we should change a doctor for mother. My mother became better thanks to this priest. Drawing lots, he decided that we should get a doctor from the northern direction. The new doctor

was a herb doctor. The medicine this doctor gave to my mother was very effective and she got better soon. The Tenrikyō priest told us what a grateful thing it was that my mother became healthy again. Since then my mother came to believe in Tanrikyō. However, the rest of my family were not interested in it. In general, we did not have any particular religious interest.

Q: Have you ever heard about Christianity in Japan?

A: Yes, but only once. There was a high school student in the village who had been influenced by Christianity. He talked about Christianity when he was back in the village during the summer vacation and I went to hear him once.

Q: Would you tell me about the time when you were leaving for the United States?

A: In those days anybody who wished to come to the United States was considered as an unpatriotic person, although most of the youth then seemed to have shared the feeling that it was non-sentimental to remain in the country. Anybody when he became eighteen received a physical examination for conscription. In March everybody was stopped from leaving the country because a physical examination was conducted from March 15 until July. They said that every citizen should participate in the war between Japan and Russia and all the eighteen years old were kept indoors. Therefore I thought I had to leave as quickly as possible and applied for a passport immediately after the New Year's Day. I must have received my passport in two or three weeks because I could leave Japan in February.

Q: Did they issue you a passport quickly?

A: Yes, they did in those days. It was still good then.

Q: What year was it?

A: I think it was 1905. Thus, I came to the States. I did not have any particular idea of what I would like to do in the States. I had a vague idea that something would work out once I came over here.

Q: You didn't come here as a student, did you?

A: No, I came here in the form of business inspection. In order to come here as a student, one had to be a graduate of high school.

Q: Did you go to Hawaii first?

A: I stopped over there on my way here.

Q: What kind of people were aboard the ship which you got on?

A: I was surprised to find so many people aboard. There was a large group of young people of my age immigrating to Hawaii. Since I was a countryman, I first thought that all the other people were already speaking English. I did not seem to understand what they were talking. I guess I did not understand them because they were speaking to each other in their own dialect. Those from Kyushu spoke Kyushu dialect and the people from Hiroshima spoke Hiroshima dialect. Quite a few people were from Kyushu, Hiroshima and Tohoku, but there were only a few from Yamanashi -- myself and two other guys. They all spoke in groups, but I really did not understand them at all.

Q: Were they all men?

A: Yes, only men. There were no women aboard. I think they hadn't had succeeded enough to get wives from Japan yet. They were still working. It was probably five or six years later that people started bringing their wives back from Japan. A person had to work in the United States at least for three, four years even to make money for the expense of going back to Japan. Those who made money must have gone back to get their old lovers or to find somebody for their wife. There were a lot of people who could not go back to Japan to get their wives. Thus, the system of picture bride was born. They decided their wives through the exchange of pictures.

Q: Do you remember how big the ship was?

A: It was about 6000 tons, called geiikubō(?).

Q: Do you remember any incidence that happened on the ship?

A: I don't remember anything. I think there was not any incidence which remained in my memory.

Q: What kind of a country did you think the United States was?

A: Our neighbor's young son also went to the States, so I used to ask his family what the United States was like, how the wealthy people were, whether I could study over there, etc. I heard that the United States was a huge country and very rich and that it is the country where one could act as he wished. Although I had not been to the country, I thought it was really a nice country by listening to people and looking at some pictures. I don't know the reason, but I anyhow longed for this country. It might have been that I felt I had to get out of Japan as soon

as possible because the war started. This must have strongly urged me to come to the United States.

Q: What part of the United States did you come first?

A: It was San Francisco.

Q: What was your first impression of San Francisco?

A: My first impression was bad. It was just about the time when Japanese started coming in to the country. Japan won the war with Russia and made Port Authur fall. Port Authur was considered then as the strongest port in the Orient and Japan took this impregnable military port which protected Russia all those years. Japan began to occupy a part of Russia in October and it was perhaps on New Year's Day that a big celebration on the victory of the war was held in Japan. I think Americans started thinking that Japanese were crazy. There was a fear among Americans -- particularly among government officials and press people -- since such a small country as Japan successfully fought against a big country, Russia and even fell that impregnable Port Authur. Particularly a Los Angeles paper, *Chronicles* (?), used to write about bad things about Japanese and suggested that the United States should not let such dreadful people enter the country. This must have been the very beginning of anti-Japanese movement. It was March or April of 1905. When I landed, a man from a Japanese inn was at a port to meet me with a one-horse carriage. As we went along, we were bombarded with abuses such as Japs, lewd, etc. They even picked horse-dung on the street and threw them at us. There was a gang

of scoundrels who came to treat Japanese roughly as soon as they heard Japanese entered a port. They were like radical teenagers today. There were a group of fifteen to twenty youngsters who shouted, "Let's go. Japs have come." We rushed to the inn, avoiding to be hit. Thus, I received an impression that this was a terrible place. This was my very first impression of America. I was baptized with Horse-dung.

Q: Did such an incidence happen again frequently?

A: Some young people from Yamanashi prefecture who were working for the Nichibei Times in San Francisco came to the inn to meet me asked me what I was going to do. I answered to them that I would do anything if there were a job. They suggested me to come to their newspaper office. They thought there would be some job for me in the office. My job there was to set type for the paper. I did this work for three months. At that time Americans' feeling toward Japanese was already bad in general and we were advised not to walk alone during the day and not to go out at night. Particularly it was dangerous after the school was over. I never went out at night and even during the day I tried to avoid the streets where American youngsters might be. I felt very insecure not economically but physically. Another thing I remember is those incidences in which young Japanese who worked for the paper came back to the office beaten up. There were some delivery boys and others worked in the office. Sometimes we were rejoiced each other by the fact that we were not hit that day. It happened frequently that some of us were beaten on the street. Thus, I began to think that San

Francisco was not good place to stay. I also started to think that my job at the Japanese newspaper company was not something I should hold on to as my career. Besides I realized that there weren't many opportunities elsewhere either. I wanted to get a kind of job for which I could work any time and anywhere. Somebody suggested me to work for a laundry. It is a dirty job, but I thought it a good job because there would always be work to do and I could get the job anywhere. Anyhow I decided to leave San Francisco and go to Los Angeles since somebody told me that southern California was nice. The population of San Francisco then was about 500,000, while Los Angeles had only 200,000 although the latter was a much larger city than San Francisco. Los Angeles was a very new city, still at the stage of being built up. Thus, I went to Los Angeles. It was about May or June since I was in San Francisco for three months.

Q: Did you go down to Los Angeles by train?

A: Yes, I went down there by train. Oh, no, I am sorry, I went down to L.A. by boat. The boat fare from San Francisco to Los Angeles was eight dollars and thirty-five cents.

Q: What did you do after you got to Los Angeles?

A: There were a few jobs available, but nobody did not give me one because I was still very young, being barely eighteen years old. I went to pick oranges to an orchard, but I was told that I was still a child and I should work as a school boy. Thus, I became a school boy for the family who owned the ranch. My job in the family was to help the wife with housework. However, it did not

seem that I would be able to go to school, so I left the family in a week or two. I stayed at an inn for a while, looking for a job. It was difficult to find a job in those days. In the meantime a friend of mine told me that there was a position open as the second cook on the ship. Since I did not know anything about a kitchen, I told him that I could not dare to work as a cook. However, Mr. Okada, who was a chief cook, told me that it would be all right and that he would teach me what to do. Mr. Okada further told me that what a cook on the ship had to do was peel potatoes and to wash dishes and pans and that I would be all right if I would do everything that he taught me to do. Thus, I decided to go with him and got on the ship. The ship was a transport for the navy, which followed a navy fleet, carrying food, ammunition and things necessary for the fleet. Before I got on the ship, I learned that the ship was bound for New York. I thought it would be nice to be able to see the city of New York free. This motivated me to get on the ship. We went to the Gulf of Mexico where fleet exercises were held. We were able to watch the exercises and then we came back to San Francisco for refueling and to load necessary things for the fleet. When I started wondering where we were going, I thought it would be nice if we could go to New York. There was a change in the order from the chief of the fleet. We were now ordered to go to Alaska instead of New York. Alaska then was considered as a desolate place. Those on the ship thought what a terrible place to go to. We imagined that waves up there would be so rough that some of us might be washed away. I decided to get

off the ship because I got on the ship hoping to go to New York and besides I did not like to lose my life being washed away by waves. I told our chief who was a black person that I liked to get off the ship. I was easily dismissed since there was not any contract and it was fairly easy to find replacement in San Francisco. I soon took the boat back to Los Angeles. A friend of mine was worried about my whereabouts and left the message at an inn, saying that there would be a job on a farm. Thus, I went to this farm in Long Beach and worked there. It was the land of about two acres owned by a British man named Whitney, who was a carpenter himself. We grew strawberries on this farm. Mr. Whitney took the strawberries to the market in the morning, which we picked the day before. I guess I worked there for about three months.

Q: Could you get along with sailors on the ship?

A: We did not have much contact with sailors. We prepared the meals and a boy came to pick them. We also prepared meals for a captain and officers. So, as long as we did our work, it was all right. Besides my job was to help a chief cook. Thus, we did not have any direct contact with sailors.

Q: How was your English then?

A: I did not know it well, but I could understand what people said in general. When I worked for the Japanese paper, I studied English very hard for three months. I guess I was beginning to understand English little then.

Q: What did you do after you left the farm?

A: On the farm I was paid only a dollar and a half for ten hours of work although this was better than in San Francisco. The work on this farm was also seasonal. When strawberries were over, my work was over, too. We decided to go to Fresno, hoping to get some job there. We thought we could earn three, four dollars at least in Fresno. However, we were afraid of getting sick in Fresno since malaria was quite spread and it was also hot there without many trees in those days. Yet we decided to go to Fresno because we thought it was a good place to earn money although it was quite hot. Various changes started taking place in my life since then. First, I worked in a vineyard in Fresno. It was so hot that I could not even see things on the other side. We started working early in the morning and came back to our camp at night, which was just a barrack. It was a terrible place. It is amazing to think how we could live in such a terrible place. One morning we got up early as usual, finished breakfast and found that one of us was still sleeping. We tried to wake him up but found him dead. Nobody knew that he was dead. He worked all day the day before, came back tired and went to bed. He never woke up. This incidence made me realize a conflict in my life. Making money is fine. But I started to think that it would be meaningless if I died in this struggle. I came here to make money, but what would it mean if I died even before making some money. I wondered whether it would make any difference if I earned some money. Since then when I went to work to the field, I worked only early in the

morning and later in the afternoon and took a rest under a fig tree during the day. After I finished the work in this vineyard, I went to another big vineyard in Farlor(?). There, too, I worked, taking care of my body. I never worked so hard as others did. The grape season was over in October. August and September are the busiest months. I needed some money to come back to San Francisco (?). Luckily I saw an advertisement for track men. I immediately became a track man and came back to Santa Ana (?). All of these things happened in the same year of 1905. From San Francisco I went down to Los Angeles, got on the ship and went to Gulf of Mexico, came back to San Francisco again, and then took a boat again to go to Los Angeles. I also went to Fresno in the same year and came back here (?). During this whole year I experienced a lot. It was the next year, 1906 that there was a earthquake in San Francisco. My Japanese acquaintance who first took care of me got sick in San Francisco. I and my friend, Mr. Uchida, were then working again in the field in the suburbs of Pasedena. We heard the news of San Francisco earthquake. It was, I guess, April 19th. Then we knew that this man from the same prefecture as ours was really sick. I guess he was suffering from t.b. and the doctor thought he would die from it. Thus, three of us, myself and Mr. Uchida and another guy, contributed jointly so that he would be able to go back to Japan. We sent a telegram to people in San Francisco, informing our plan for the man. Mr. Uchida went to San Francisco by train and put this man on the ship for Japan. Later we learned that this man was carried on a stretcher when the ship

landed at a port, and went back to his home town safely, but he died after a week. When three of us got together to make a plan for this man, we discussed various things. One of the things I remember even today is that we would be really insecure if we did not have money. We thought that if we carried money always with us, we would not get sick. At that time we did not have any paper money but coins. My friend suggested me that I should carry a five dollar coin always with me. What a silly superstition that was! But my friend was serious. After we sent this youth back to Japan, we got together again at an inn and talked. I received a five dollar coin from my friend, and parted with them, carrying the coin with me. This young man who gave me a coin also died about twenty days after that. He was working in a strawberry farm owned by a Morita who was a gardener. Here he caught fever. He was hospitalized at Tanaka Hospital and died a few days later. They sent a messenger to us informing the death of this man since he was from the same place in Japan as we. He worked for the Japanese newspaper in the beginning. His son, named Komae, is now succeeding what his father started. We were very surprised by this news because it had been only twenty days or so since we parted with him. We went to the hospital immediately. As it was mid-summer, it was terribly muggy. We found our friend lying on the bed covered with a sheet. We took the sheet off and he was dead. I strongly felt uncertainty about life then. (I was only eighteen at that time and I really felt uncertain particularly

about death.) This man was fine when we parted from each other, but died even within a month. This incidence was not so bad. This man's younger brother was in Salt Lake City, so I sent a telegram to him. It said, "Brother died. Come immediately." However, we did not hear even a word from him. Since there was no alternative we finished the funeral. About a week after the funeral, we received a telegram and his younger brother came out to Los Angeles. He thought it would be bad to let us wait for the funeral until he could come out. I took him to his brother's graveyard. We had dinner together that night, chatted for a while and left each other. About a month later he died, too. It was after he went back to Salt Lake City. I did not know anything about his death. I guess people in Salt Lake City did not know that we were all from the same place in Japan or they may have thought it was too far to come even if they let us know the news. We learned much later that he died and was buried there. His death meant that out of five who came to the United States from the same place in Japan, three were already dead. I keenly felt that this was no longer somebody's problem but my problem. I felt that death was staring me in the face, thinking whose turn the next will be. Since then I was overwhelmed by the fear of death. Even when I heard birds crying, I felt they must have come to inform me my coming death. My father, also, died the following year. He was only 49. Thus I was followed by the fear of death and strongly felt uncertainty in life. It was about this time that I wished to have a faith to overcome this fear of death although I did not feel like

going to Christian Church. I quit the work I was doing then, being overwhelmed with uncertainty in life. Then I came to Pasadena and stayed at Pasadena boarding house. The fear of death still followed me and I searched something for help although I never thought Christianity could change my feeling. However, I thought if I started going to Christian church I could go to the church's night school and learn English. Thus, I was introduced to Christianity. Once I listened to Christian preaches my view of life changed totally. Until that time the fear of death and the death of my friends and father darkly shadowed my view of life, but Christianity taught me that Christ died for our sin but the Resurrection opened up our eternal life. Later I began to believe strongly in this, but I was doubtful in the beginning. While in elementary school we all learned that we were born as Japanese although it is up to an individual person whether he thinks it was fortunate or not. I've always had an idea that I was a Japanese. When I heard about God, I wondered whether God they were talking about was God for Westerners but not for Japanese nor me. Concerning the death of Christ I could not conceive that Christ died for our sin. I felt it was true that Christ died but he was a Jew. And then I wondered what kind of relationship there would be between a Jew and Japanese. Thus, I could not quite understand Christianity. As I learned more about Christianity, Bible, etc., I came to understand that Japanese, too, is a member of human beings and I really understood the love of brotherhood in

Christianity. I also learned that every human being was created equally by God and that Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, and Caucasians were all children in God's eyes. As I believe in these things, my ideas about human beings, human love, etc. gradually began to change. I also began to feel a sense of belongingness in human love because we were all created by one God. In the meantime I could drop such narrow minded idea as Japanese was Japanese and I also became doubtful about Japanese religion. Tenrikyo taught me that Japanese god was only for Japanese. After I learned about Christianity, I felt that Japanese god was a part of God Christianity taught but I could no longer believe that Japanese god like Amaterasuomikami protected only Japanese. For the first time I could understand the love of human brotherhood, Christ's death, and the Resurrection as I learned more about Christianity. It was important for me to experience myself. Although I thought what I believed was right, I realized that there was some difference between what I thought was right and what a holy man taught was right. I really thought that this Christian spirit was the very thing we all human beings should understand. Up to that time pray was always one for happiness, safety, and health for myself and my family. Of course, we prayed to Japanese god for these things. After I was introduced to teachings of Christianity, I began to feel differently. Mr. Watanabe who took chairmanship in service prayed to God for that we would be led to correct way in our everyday life by him. We never prayed to Japanese god for other people but it was always for ourselves. I was strongly

impressed by that people prayed for other people, poor people, those in trouble, etc. I did feel that this very spirit was the one that could maintain peace in our minds, smooth personal relationship and build up real peace in the world, smoothing the relationship between nations and maintaining a real friendship. Thus I decided to get baptized in Christianity. It took me about a year until I could straighten up Japanese ideas I used to have and new Christian ideas I was getting. What I believed in until then began to look rather childish and Christian god seemed so big to embrace all human beings. Nobody asked me to become a Christian, so I told them that I was interested in getting baptized. They were pleased to hear this and told me that they could baptize me any time. Christianity, God's teaching, saved me when I was so distressed by the death of people who were close to me. Thus, what motivated me to enter into Christianity was related to death. This is the way I feel about my motivations.

Q: What was the difference between what you believed is right and what was considered to be right in Christianity?

A: For example, what I thought was right was that I would not do any wrong. I learned that that I did not do any wrong was not the only thing right in Christianity. I had to do some good, too. (It was not enough not to do anything wrong.) Christian idea of what was wrong was a little different from what I believed in. For instance, I may feel some sexual desire when I see some woman. I did not think there was anything wrong in

this. I learned in Christianity that what one felt inside was also important. If a person hates somebody very much, it is not necessary that he is innocent of murdering the man. I always thought it was all right if I did not do anything wrong no matter what I thought inside. Thus, the difference lied at the bottom of my mind. I really feel that I was thus saved. Of course, even today, I think of something bad once in a while since I am human. However, Christianity taught me the way to repent of it. It gave me a hope to recover myself from such a bad thought and live an honest life in the lord of God (?). I am very grateful to that such a way was opened for me.

Q: Was this in 1910?

A: Yes, it was 1910 that I began to have a faith.

Q: Was it in Los Angeles?

A: It was Pasadena. It is Pasadena Church now, but when I joined it was Pasadena Union Church (?) (kumiai kyōkai).

Q: Was this former name of Pasadena Church?

A: Yes. We had this Kumiai Kyōkai and a few years later another church, called Friend Kyōkai, was founded in Pasadena. So we had then two churches for about 100 Japanese in Pasadena. We felt that it was not necessary and uneconomical to have two churches for this small population and decided to unite them. It was Rev. Hatada (?) who originated this idea. In 1912 Sekai kyoreikai taikai (World Christian Endeavor Meeting) was held in Los Angeles. This, Christian Endeavor (?), seems no longer to exist. Rev. Tatsujiro Sawaya came to attend this Christian Endeavor meeting, representing Japanese Christian Endeavor.

Rev. Sawaya came to the United States to engage in a mission work with an understanding that he would be given time but not money by Japanese Christian Church. Rev. Kawai, who was a founder of present Adams Christian Church, got to know Rev. Sawaya and decided to ask Rev. Sawaya to work on this unification project since he had six months leave. We all thought it was an excellent idea. Thus, Rev. Sawaya worked to unite Pasadena Union Church and Friend Church and new church called Japanese Union Church was organized. It used to be that Pasadena Union Church was supported by Union Church itself and Friend Church was also supported by itself. However, with this unification of two churches, we thought that our new church should not only be supported by these two churches but it should be a part of all the Protestant churches in Pasadena. To organize the Protestants and their churches in Pasadena, a new organization named Federate Mission of Pasadena was formed. Every organization which belonged to this group contributed for our new church. It was August, 1913. Thus new church was supported by neither Friend Church nor Pasadena Union Church but by Church Federation of Pasadena.

Q: When was this?

A: It was 1913. The church lasted until the war started and later it became Presbyterian Church. Nine different Protestant churches belonged to this Federate Mission of Pasadena and shared expenses. As I understood it, big churches contributed about twenty dollars and small ones ten dollars. Brethren Church, could not contribute

financially but they had important manpower. They provided teachers for Sunday school or for night school. In addition to regular services, there were three other services the church provided. They were night English school, dormitory facility and placement. A young man who came here could stay at the church, get a job through church's placement service and study English at their night school. There were quite a few people who received service and care from the church.

Q: Was it later that you started going to school regularly?

A: It was after the first World War that I started going to school regularly.

Q: When was the first World War?

A: It was from 1914 to 1918. It was 1917 when the United States participated in the war.

Q: What did you do during this period?

A: I hesitate to tell you this, but members of church told their minister that a minister's work load was very heavy and that there should be somebody to help him. When we had Rev. Hata, we noticed that there were some areas which he could not take care of although he was a scholar and an excellent preacher. Thus, I thought there had to be a man who could work as a minister's assistant. There had to be a secretary. I strongly felt this when we had Rev. Hata. I should not perhaps mention this here but young people started criticizing Rev. Hata and even initiated anti-Rev. Hata movement. I thought it was too bad when I heard this. I thought there should be a man who could

defend the minister. Thus I became a church secretary. I did this work for a while. I received just fifteen dollars from the church since our church did not have enough money. My work started from seven o'clock in the morning. I first woke up guys staying at our church's dormitory and gave them jobs. Then I went to work, too. I worked as a gardener and did some house work, too. I came back to the church in the evening and helped to prepare classes in night school although the minister was a teacher. On Saturday I did cleaning in the dormitory. As I think back now, I am really impressed with myself. I wanted to do some services. I think this lasted for about two years. The reason why I could sympathize with the minister was that he always thought of everybody. I admired him. I even tried to listen to his problems. In the meantime, however, I got sick. I guess my faith was not strong enough then. I thought I could overwork myself a little bit since I was working for God. I am certainly wiser now. Thus, I strained myself and finally had nervous prostration. I realized that I could not take any more and quit my work for the church. Then I went to San Diego to recuperate there for three months and came back to Pasadena again, where I worked as a gardener again. Gardener's work was the easiest since I did not use my head. Since I was baptized, I always had a desire to serve for the church. Particularly when church members quietly criticized our minister's weak points. I could really sympathize with the minister. As you may have had some experience, the minister was anxious to know

his sermon was accepted. He used to ask me how his sermon of the day was. Our minister then was Rev. Kohata who graduated Pacific Theological School. We also had a minister who graduated from University of Washington for a while. Then we had a minister who later became a president of Tōhoku Gakuin. All these ministers were newcomers to our church, so they were rather nervous about church members. If a member did not show up for even two weeks, they started worrying about him. I noticed that they were carefully watching church members. They were worried if there might have been something bad and hoped people would show up next week. As I came to learn that ministers were really concerned about Church members, I felt I should at least attend service every Sunday, being faithful to our Church. I thought it was a job given to me to take some load off from a minister although I was not particularly talented to preach the gospel. I just thought it was my duty.

Q: What do you mean by a secretary? Did you mean a business manager?

A: Yes, a business manager. In those days the church had a dormitory so a secretary's job was to take care of rooms in the dormitory, collect rent for church accountant and do some preparatory work for classes in night school, classifying students into proper classes, etc. A secretary had to know all the teachers, too, who were all Caucasians, coming from various churches. I did not have anything to do with Sunday school although I did some things such as arranging tables. In Sunday school teachers did almost everything. My job was also to give jobs, clean in the

dormitory and distribute sheets once a week. This was the job I had as a church secretary. I would have done a lot more other things if I were a full-time secretary. I was just a part-time secretary, with fifteen dollars salary a month.

Q: Which school did you go to after the war?

A: I went to the war. Nobody understands what motivated me to go to the war. The reason why I volunteered was as follows: my Sunday school teacher who was born in Germany and came to the United States at the age of five had only son who was born in China. She came to Chicago because there were quite a few Germans there. In Chicago she received her education and married a person who was going to become a minister. They went to China to engage in a missionary work there, but her husband caught malaria and died. Thus, she came back to the United States with her only son, Kenneth. She went back to Chicago, which was sort of her second hometown. However, she had nervous breakdown because of this unhappy event and came out to southern California where the weather was desirable. Therefore she came to Pasadena. Being enthusiastic about a missionary work, she first wanted to do service for Chinese. Since there was no Chinese Christian church, she came to our church and became a president of our Sunday school. Our church remunerated her for her service although I had nothing to do with accounting. Her son volunteered for service when he was eighteen years old just after he graduated from high school. All of one hundred and fifty graduates of Pasadena High School that year volunteered

for service. I was strongly impressed with this. Since he was the only son and had only one parent, he could have been exempted from service. I was impressed very much with the fact that this only son was volunteering to participate in the war of the United States against German which was his mother's native place and that his mother was letting her son do this. I thought this was why America was doing well. About the same time a minister of outside-of-district church, Rev. Daniel Forks, had a son and a daughter. His only son was studying at Princeton Theological School, but Rev. Forks encouraged his son to quit school and volunteer for service. I was so surprised with this. This minister was a German and he dared to send his son to the war against his own country, Germany. Rev. Daniel Forks harshly criticized Germany as a crazy devil in his sermon. I have never seen such a scene. The title of his sermon was "Do we belong to the Kaiser or Christianity?" In those days I used to go to Caucasian church in the morning and to Japanese church in the evening. Rev. Forks pointed out all the bad things the Kaiser had been doing. There were some people among the audience that the minister was a German and they could not expect that Rev. Forks, a German would attack the Kaiser so harshly. All the audience stood up and applauded him for his speech. There were some bad Germans, but I was impressed with that Germans could do things boldly. Thus, I thought I should volunteer for service. I have never told anybody about this nor I have never had any opportunity to talk about this. It was soon after I quit the

work as a church secretary. I suffered a great deal, thinking whether fighting in the war might be murdering and whether this behavior would accord with God's teachings. I went to the Draft Board and told them that I was a Christian and believed that the love of God should be given equally to any human kind and that I could not agree with the idea human brothers and sisters fought against each other. However, in reality brothers and sisters were killing each other. I told them that I would not be able to participate in such a killing but what I thought I could do was to provide some psychological help to those who participate in such a killing and those who were wounded in it. And I asked them if they thought they needed me. They said that there were plenty of volunteers and that they would be able to put me in such a position. Then, I said that I would volunteer for service. It was April, 1917 that the United States declared the war and it was July of that year that I finally volunteered for service after a great deal of consideration. However, I did not hear anything from the Draft Board afterwards. I thought that they would not take me since I was a Japanese. Finally in November, however, I received a notice to appear. I was turned down in physical examination first time but in the second time I passed it and I was ready to go. In April, 1918, I received an order for calling out. There were about sixty people from Pasadena alone. I knew some of them. I went to Camp East first, where I received a basic training. Aliens who did not have U.S. citizenship had to apply for citizenship. So I did, too. A clerk in the office where I applied for citizenship

looked at my face and asked me whether I was a Japanese. So I said, "Yes." Then he said, "I am awfully sorry. You will be a good soldier, but under our present law we cannot accept you." He tore up my paper and burned it. I came back with others. Other people told me that I had better get out of there. They told me that I would be better off in Japan since I had to struggle with difficulties here. However, I told them that I did not come here to get citizenship but to serve for the country and that I did not have any reason to go back. Some of them though wondered about me and sort of suspected if I was a spy from Japanese military. After a while people stopped talking to me. I felt strange. I guess they must have believed this spy business. I did not speak to them either because I did not have anything to do with it. I was behaving natural. After a six-week basic training, we all were assigned to different military groups according to one's ability. Those who did not have any particular ability were all put in an infantry corps. I was also assigned to an infantry corps. After some training in an infantry corps I asked our commanding chief if I was going to remain this unit. He said, "Yes." I told our captain, Williams, who was very understanding, that I volunteered to come here. He told me that he knew that. I then told him that I volunteered for a medical corps since people at the Draft Board said that it would be possible for me to join a medical corps as they've got a lot of volunteers and that to remain in an infantry corps was certainly different from my original

purpose for volunteering for service. I made it clear that I joined in the army to do service for those who were wounded in the war and those who were in trouble psychologically or otherwise and asked him if they could do something about this. The captain said, "I see." Then he told me that I could ask to be transferred to a medical corps but I would be assigned to the hospital on the base where we were and I would not be able to serve for those who were wounded in the war. He also added that those who were in the hospital on the base were sort of bad quality -- some had a venereal disease, etc. He said that there were a lot of guys who caught a venereal disease on purpose so that they would not be sent to the war and asked me if I would like to take care of those people or if I would like to go to the war and take care of the wounded. I told him that I was interested in the latter. Then the captain said to me, that I had better keep my mouth shut and that he would do his best to put me in the position I liked once we got over to France. Thus, trusting what the captain told me, I kept quiet and received the training in an infantry corps. In June we received an order for calling out of troops. On July 4 we left New York for England. From England we went over to southern part of France where we had to practice an actual fighting. An officer came and trained us. About the same time I put in a request to our captain and asked him if he remembered what he promised me back in the United States. He said that he still remembered it and that he would take necessary procedures for me. He did.

He was a very honest man. Before I received an order for reassignment, we had to leave there to fight in the war. It was the night before we actually participated in the war that I seriously thought about what I was going to do. It was only one time in my life that I thought so seriously. We could see extensive smoke, flames coming out of the seat of the war. The sky was so red with flames. I thought I would be there tomorrow. That night we were positioned in a sunken area, so I went up to the top of the hill and quietly thought about my faith, watching the war going on. I told myself that I really did not like to kill anybody as a Christian,; I wanted so much to serve for the wounded in the war, I did my best to pursue my original wish but I was now in the place where I could no longer escape. I realized that there were two things about not being able to escape. I had a pride as a Japanese that a Japanese could not do such a cowardly thing of escaping. On the other hand I had a dilemma that if I went there there was a good chance of being killed. I thought and thought and prayed. What I remembered then was, "My father, please take this winecup from me if possible. But this is not my wish." I was rather desperate. I was a coward if I did not escape but I was a coward, too, if I escaped, which I thought would be a disgrace to Japanese. I was confused and did not know what I should do. I was angry at myself and I could no longer take that God's will be done. I could not escape and I was to actually participate in the war from the next dawn. Christ said that God's will be done to save

mankind but I was thinking of this to save myself, which was wrong, of course. The purpose was different in nature, but I felt it was the same thing since I was faced with death or life. I was extremely confused. Then I remembered the scene in which Jesus Christ took two of his disciples, John and Peter, along with him but quietly prayed by himself since they were peacefully sleeping. I felt that among two hundred and forty men in our unit nobody shared this feeling with me. I have never prayed so seriously, which was sort of pain in my heart. Later I thought that was a blessing. I really thought it was a God's blessing that I joined in an infantry corps. To tell you the truth, we did not do any real shooting although we did have machine guns. Our role was to protect an artillery corps which was right behind us. Their role was to fire a gun. If the enemy attacked them, they would not be able to do their job. Therefore, those who actually fought in the front line were machine gun soldiers who were positioned about 300 yards apart from each other and the shooting was done with those soldiers as the core. It was seldom that we had to use our rifles. There was none in our case. There may have been some occasions to use rifles if we were in a trench where we would have had to level a gun at the enemy. In our case it was only machine gun used. There were two machine guns which covered most of the front line. Our job was just to defend those in an artillery corps who used those machine guns. There were a lot of casualties. Soldiers in a medical corps ran back and forth to help the wounded in the war fire, putting a bandage over a wound, carrying

the wounded to a sunken area so that they could take care of them, etc. I thought it was God's blessing that I ended up staying in an infantry corps. As I was small, I could not have possibly carried such a big American soldier. My job in an infantry corps was much easier although I was wounded. After the war was over, I wanted to come back immediately. So I told them I was all right. However, after I came back to the United States, I got worse. I had about five hundred dollars saved then, which I used for getting medical treatment and recuperation. About this time I felt like going back to Japan once to see my mother.

Q: Were you the only Japanese in your unit?

A: Yes, I was. I was the only Japanese among approximately three thousand soldiers in the army. It was my faith that all mankind were brothers and sisters. Therefore, I did not feel anything particularly even though I was the only Japanese in the group. I do not know how others felt though.

Q: Do you think you were treated equally with your comrades?

A: Yes, I was. Everybody was treated equally in the military. I was rather trusted. There was a sergeant who was in charge of the meals for our company and responsible for all the food hunting. The sergeant received some money to purchase necessary food for the company while we were in France although we received some food from the military. This sergeant told me that I was the only person that he could trust and ask to keep the money for him. I asked him what he would do if I died. He said that he could not help it. When the war was over, there were two

million American soldiers in Europe. It took an awful lot of time to send those soldiers back to the States. We had to wait for our turn in France for seven months (?). I was rather treated well in France. Our company commander awarded me an honor for my conduct in the company which he thought set an example for other soldiers in the company. Since I was small, it was very hard for me to participate in a long march, carrying a gas mask and a gun which weighed four and seven pounds each and one hundred and sixty bullets in addition to a heavy pair of shoes which weighed about seventy kilograms altogether. Our section commander helped me with this heavy gun. I guess he sympathized with me because I was so small. There were four sections in the company. A section commander was either a sublieutenant or a lieutenant and a company commander was a captain. A sublieutenant and a lieutenant had their sections. It was about three months after I came back that I became sick. I went to Imperial Valley and rested there for three months. However, I got worse there and came back to Pasadena again. I spent seven months in bed. From May I worked for about three months to make traveling money and went back to Japan. It was only one hundred and seventy-five dollars. I went back to Japan with only this much money in my pocket. This \$175 included some money I received from my friends as Sembetsu (farewell present). I told my mother and my sisters and brothers that I came back safely. Oh, I forget to tell you that there was a good chance for me to go back to Japan. The Fifth World Sunday School Convention was held in Japan that year and I was recommended to attend

the convention, as a representative from our church. A big tour group named World Sunday School Convention Delegation was organized. Thus, it was rather inexpensive to go back to Japan. I had only \$175 but I made it to Japan anyway. A lot of things happened but I got even worse after I came back to the States. I spent two and a half years in the hospital. It was from forty-one to forty-three (Meiji?). After this I started going to school. Since the military admitted that my sickness was due to overseas exposure, G.I. bill took care of everything while I was sick. I took an entrance examination to enter a college. The result of the examination indicated that my scholarship was about the same as that of a high school graduate. Thus, I was admitted to a college. I finished four-year college work in three years by attending summer school. It was 1936 that I graduated from a college. When I was about to start going to school, I thought seriously of what I should study and went to see a school counselor about the work I did for the church and that I was interested in becoming a minister. However, this counselor told me that it was out of the question and that I would die soon if I became a minister. He further told me that a minister had to be healthy and have a strong will since a minister's work was a kind of twenty-four hour service. I later found that this counselor was an ex-minister of Baptist church but he became sick and gave up his ministership and became a school counselor. His name was Richardson. Thus, being discouraged to become a minister, I decided to become an accountant. I thought I needed to work only during the day as an accountant and also I would

be able to work even after I became old. So I majored in accounting. I finished college in 1936 but I started practice earlier than this. I think now that my life has been really fortunate. I have four children. My own father died at the age of forty-nine, so I thought that I might die young, too. Another reason why I think I was so fortunate is that I have been very healthy. When I was in the hospital, I had ample time to read many books. I read a lot about how to maintain a good health. When I was sick, I came to long for health and study about health; how to be healthy. Therefore I think it did me a favor that I became sick. I used to hope that I could live at least until my oldest son could graduate from high school. I am grateful for that my life has been really fortunate. My children not only graduated from high school but they graduated from college, too and they are now married and have their families and I am still healthy.

Q: When did you marry?

A: This was something that I never expected. When I went back to Japan with other delegates to attend the Fifth World Sunday School Convention, there were about fifty people in the group, all single male and all of them went back to Japan to find their brides. Mr. Kawai was our leader and Mr. Umeda vice leader. Those who intended to get married received some sort of identification from the consulate before they left the United States so that they could turn the paper in at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to receive passports for their new wives. I did not get any paper since I had no plan to marry. I believed and I still

believe that this was the God's guidance. Rev. Kawai who was our leader told me one day at the convention not to look for a bride as somebody was arranging it for me. I thought it was funny and asked him what happened. When I was our church's secretary, our minister passed away and we had to ask a Japanese man who came to Pasadena after graduating from University of Washington to replace him temporarily. Although he was not a minister, he was an ardent Christian. This man went back to Japan and married the daughter of Rev. Kawashimi who was a general manager of the convention. They lived in Tokyo. They must have heard that I came back to Japan somehow and his wife was arranging marriage for me. This man was not in Japan then since he was working in the Japanese consulate in London. His English was excellent. Rev. Kawakami suggested me to drop in at Rev. Kawashimi's house. Mrs. Kawashimi was also busy with women's meeting and my wife's mother was there helping. Of course I have no idea that this woman would be my mother-in-law. The convention was over in a week and I was about to leave for my home town in Yamanashi when I was told to meet some woman. Our vice-leader's wife suggested me that I should marry. I told her not to joke but I guess she was serious. Then I went back to Yamanashi and saw my families. In the meantime I received a telegram saying, "Urgent business. Come soon." I wondered what it was all about. My wife's older brother was working as a section chief for a mail steamship company in Shanghai then and I later found that they were trying to get his consent about

this arrangement. Her brother sent a telegram to Rev. Kawashimi and entrusted the matter to him. I did not know anything about this. I went back to Tokyo and then I was told that I had an interview with the prospective bride that night. I was reminded that my prospective bride was invited to come. I was really perplexed. But I was told to leave the whole matter to them. I told them that I was not ready for getting married, that I did not have much money, and that I did not have any fixed job either. I told them that I really did not have anything and that the only thing I had was my faith. They said, "Don't worry. That's all right. If you need money, we will loan it to you." I think they did not believe what I told them but they thought I had money despite what I told them. Anyway I met this girl. She came with her mother whom I saw before. They started talking about when we could marry. I told them excitedly to wait for a moment and reminded them that I had not even decided whether I would marry or not. But they asked me again to leave the matter to them. I was really in trouble, not knowing what to do. I prayed to God. I decided to go back to Yamanashi once. I told my family about the matter. Then they told me not to worry about money because they could arrange some for me and encouraged me to marry. My mother earnestly wished to see my bride's face while she was still alive, so she asked me to marry then. My mother thought she would never be able to see my bride's face if I went back not being married. My brother, too, encouraged me to marry and told me not to worry about money and that he could make it for me. When I told my brother that I

already told the other party that I did not have money, he was so disappointed at it. He thought I should not have told them such a thing because we could make money somehow. When I came home next day, my family started shopping and preparing for my marriage. That night I did pray to God, not knowing what to do. People around me were so enthusiastic and arranging everything for me, yet I met my wife only once. I thought things had come to such a pretty pass. I could not sleep that night and next morning I asked my family to forget about the whole thing. I told them that I had a terrible headache and liked to go to Nikko to rest for a while. I also told them I would pay back for anything that they already spent for me. However, my family could not forget about the whole thing. They thought I was suffering from insomnia and gave me some pills. I took two white pills they gave me and fell into a sound sleep.

(Tape No. 2)

I may be repeating myself, but I was really troubled although I now think it was the God's grace. We got married after a while. When I woke up, I felt good and told my family that I was all right. They were so pleased to hear this. I think the wedding took place about two days after. I was in Japan for only twenty-nine days. We arrived in Japan on October 9 and left on November 8. So everything had to be done in this short period. I went to the embassy to find out whether I could get a passport. They told me that they could issue a passport easily if I brought a copy of my family register in which my new wife was entered. As far as the paper work was concerned,

everything went smoothly. I told our go-between that I would go back to the United States once and call my wife when I got settled there and asked them to take care of her until then. However, they refused, to do so, saying that they could not take care of her because a woman was like uncooked food. They told me that I should take her back with me since she was now my wife. I was in trouble again. I was confronted with all sorts of problems. I do think that God led the way for me. Thus, I came back to the United States as a married man but I became sick shortly. I was sick for about two years and then went to school. A lot of things happened during this period. When I was first hospitalized, the doctor thought that it would take about six months. After six months, however, the doctor thought that it might take another six months until I got better. I told my wife that seemed to take much longer than I had expected and asked her if she would go back to Japan dissolving marriage since I might not be able to work even when I recovered from illness. However, she said that she would remain as my wife until my death for she married me. I thought her feeling was understandable. I am very grateful to the fact that we have been able to have such a fortunate life until today. When I was about to get married, I prayed seriously. There were two times in my life when I did pray. One time was the night before we fought against Germans and the other time was when I was getting married. In both occasions the problem was really a serious one in my whole life. I have never prayed so seriously

other times. God did lead the way for me. That's why I am so thankful for this God's grace and like to do some service to God within my ability.

Q: What did you do after you graduated from college?

A: I became an accountant, for I majored in accounting.

Q: Did you become a C.P.A.?

A: No. There is a story about this. One had to have a two-year practice in an established C.P.A. firm and a recommendation from the firm in order to take a C.P.A. examination. The placement office at school tried to find a job for me when I was about to graduate, but they could not find any firm which would be willing to hire a Japanese. It was 1926. They could not conceive of hiring a Japanese. Thus, I had to drop the idea of becoming a C.P.A. Being unable to work for an established C.P.A. firm, there was no hope for becoming a C.P.A. In those days, however, one could work as an accountant if he had a certificate from school which indicates satisfactory completion of accounting course. Last year I received a notice that under a new regulation there is no longer such a thing called a public accountant unless one is a C.P.A. I did have a chance to receive a certificate for public accountant but I did not know about it. When I was in Japan in the occupation forces, I worked in general accounting section. I opened my office when I came back to the United States. Somebody asked me if I submitted an application for a certificate of a public accountant, and suggested me to do so because I could get a certificate without taking any examination. Those who worked in general accounting section with

me in the forces all received certificates. Those who studied accounting at school or had some experience as an accountant could receive a certificate if they applied for it. So I applied for it. However, I was told that my qualification expired two months ago and my application was sent back.

Q: Were you in Los Angeles?

A: Yes. My office was in Los Angeles.

Q: How did you do during the depression?

A: I guess I was really lucky. The depression did not particularly affect my business. If I worked for somebody, the situation might have been different. I had my own independent business, so it was rather good. When the general business conditions changed, I received various business.

Q: Did you buy a house?

A: Yes.

Q: When was it that you bought a house first time?

A: It was 1929. It was two months before we had the depression. If we waited for another two months, we could have bought the house for half a price we paid for.

Q: Did you have any trouble in buying a house?

A: It was pretty troublesome. I had a citizenship which the U.S. government recognized but the title company would not recognize my citizenship, which meant I could not buy land by my name. Therefore we bought our house, using our child's name. One of our acquaintances, who was a Caucasian, became a guardian for our child and he bought our house for our child.

Q: Do you know Mrs. Covert?

A: Yes, I know her.

Q: Will you tell me about her and her husband a little bit?

A: I know her as a person who was really nice to Japanese and there were a lot of Japanese who became Christians because of her influence. That's about what I know about her.

Q: How did you get to know her?

A: I heard about her from Japanese who came here. There were quite a few church members who knew her. Mr. Inoue, Rev. Kitagawa and so forth. I understand that Mrs. Covert took care of Rev. Kitagawa very kindly with Christian spirit, which influenced him to become a minister. Rev. Kitagawa came to Pasadena where he studied at Univ. of Pasadena and went back to Japan. I have seen her once or twice and exchanged greetings but I have never had a chance to talk about my life to her. So I learned about her through Rev. Kitagawa and Mr. Inoue. There was a camp for orange pickers near Pasadena and I understand those who were in this camp were under the influence of Mrs. Covert.

Q: What kind of hobbies do you have? What kind of things do you do for leisure?

A: I am embarrassed to tell you this but I have none. I always worked. I don't like to brag of myself but I struggled with difficulties. I was sick for a while and poor. I had a faith that my body was given to me by God so that I should not use it selfishly. Another reason why I kind of avoided having a hobby was my fear of that I might die any day. I felt to use my energy and time for my own recreation and fun was not excuseable to God. It was because I have been saved by God in my case. It was my

faith that if I had time I should use it for God. I know how to play go, but I don't play it. I don't do fishing, either. My children say that I am stupid because I do not have any hobby. I could not play with them, I feel sorry for them. I know too many people who died very young and felt that it was the God's grace that I was still alive. Thus, I thought I should not use my extra time and energy for myself. That's why I do not have any hobby today except eating.

Q: How much did you pay for your house?

A: I paid four thousand and nine hundred dollars for it and put fifteen hundred dollars for down payment.

Q: How many bedrooms did you have?

A: There were three bedrooms, living room, dining room and kitchen.

Q: In those days what kind of Japanese organizations did you have?

A: Do you mean organizations in Pasadena?

Q: Yes, in Pasadena.

A: We had only Nihonjin Kai (Japanese Club) in Pasadena.

Q: Was Nihonjin Kai helpful to you?

A: They did mainly political things. They may have supported a Japanese school. They celebrated Emperor's birthday, showed Japanese movies, did some campaign for fund raising, etc. When anti-Japanese feelings were developed, Nihonjin Kai took an initiative in creating a movement against this. However, when American started thinking that Nihonjin Kai was an agent for Japanese government, the church became a center instead for fighting against anti-Japanese movement. The biggest problem

we had was Alien Land Act of 1920 which prohibited aliens from buying land. Another big problem was a new immigration law of 1924 which stopped the immigration of the colored race. At that time our Japanese church was active and appealed to other Caucasian church that the act was too unchristian.

Q: Did Caucasians listen to this well?

A: In Pasadena sixty percent of them showed a favor to us. Pasadena was a Christian town. It may have changed but churches had power then. When our church appealed to other churches, they agreed to that the act was unchristian. In Pasadena this new measure was not passed.

Q: I will skip a little bit but where were you when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: I was at church, attending service.

Q: Did you live in Pasadena although your office was in Los Angeles?

A: Yes, I have lived in Pasadena since 1909.

Q: Did you buy a house here in Pasadena?

A: Yes.

Q: How did you feel when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: When we were about to leave the church after the service, the oldest son of Rev. Tajima heard it on the radio and told us that an announcer on the radio shouted, "Japan attacked Pearl Harbor." Rev. Tajima's son was in Guam working for the movement of MRA but came back to Pasadena only two days before the attack, being recommended that American citizens had better leave the area. We were all so surprised. I don't remember this myself

but it looks like I said that Japan committed a suicide. Catherine Funning who used to help our church heard my words. She was quite a sympathizer of Japanese. She was in Japan as a missionary but was sent back to the United States as the situation got worse and came to our church to help. Rev. Tajima thought that we needed some Caucasian who could help our church as a principal for Sunday School, etc. Later she got sick and died. Before she died, I went to see her. It was after I came back to Pasadena from the camp. She asked me then why I said that Japan committed a suicide. I told her that I must have said such a thing because I felt Japan might not be able to win the war. As I knew the U.S. military, its strategy and the Japanese character, I thought it would be impossible for Japan to win the war.

Q: Will you tell me about the relocation?

A: Though a lot of people objected to the relocation, I myself considered it was good for Japanese. After the war started, all the Japanese leaders were taken away and detained. I was the only person who still maintained an office in Los Angeles and a lot of Japanese came to my office to consult with me. Japanese were considered as enemy once the war started and people felt that Japanese should not be hired. Such an order never came but it was the general mood during that time. Approximately ten Japanese who were working for a public office felt they could no longer work for the department because they were considered as enemy aliens and their representative came to see me, asking for help. They were really in trouble, not being able

to find any other jobs and not having enough savings. I told them not to worry. I thought America was a Christian country and she could not let her people starve to death. I knew that in the WWI enemy soldiers were well fed, clothed and sheltered when they surrendered, giving up their weapons. I believed that the U.S. government would not let Japanese suffer. I told them not to worry and that a new way would be opened for them and they went back. Those who managed hotels came to me, complaining that they could no longer collect charges. People who had grocery stores also could not collect charge accounts from the customers. Everybody was worried and uneasy about what would happen in the future. From early in the morning to late at night I was overwhelmed by people's complaints, inquiries and worries. People kept calling me on the phone, too. I had three employees then in my office. Some woman's husband was taken away and she could no longer pay rent for her place. She asked me when her husband would come back but I had no idea about when he would be released. A lot of women and children were in trouble after their husbands were taken away. They could not draw more than one hundred dollars at a time from a bank. Banks were blocked up, there were no jobs but they still had to make payments. I was kept being asked what they should do. When I heard about the evacuation, I really thought that Japanese would be rescued. Our worries and uneasiness would be solved by this. A lot of people say that it was inhuman but I feel that the war changes the psychology of people. In such an abnormal circumstance as a war duties and obligation and reason

and justice we normally possess become paralyzed. There were nobody to help us even when we got hurt under the circumstances. In such an emergency things which we cannot conceive of with our common sense would take place. So the only thing I hoped was that if something could be done to save our lives. Therefore, I thought the evacuation of Japanese was a good idea. I was really delighted to hear the news for I had listened to so many people's worries. Some women had five or six children and did not know what to do in the absence of their husbands. A lot of people say that it was inhuman, undemocratic and unchristian, not really understanding the circumstances under which we were then. Neither our reason nor our common sense would work in such an emergency situation like the war. People were frantic then. So if you ask me what I think of the evacuation, I still think it was good for Japanese. At least it provided us stability for life. It has been argued a lot of this question of the evacuation.

Q: Which relocation camp were you in?

A: I went to the assembly center in _____ and the camp was in _____. The incidence I still remember in the camp was that somebody raised the Japanese sun-flag on Emperor's birthday or the day of something. I was afraid that some action might be taken against this, but guards in the camp just removed the flag. Somebody put the flag up in the dawn. I did not stay in the camp so long, for I was recommended to teach Japanese at the University of Michigan and left the camp by the order from the military.

Q: Did you leave the camp before the loyalty question came up?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you know it?

A: Yes.

Q: What did you think of the loyalty question?

A: I thought Japanese should swear their loyalty to the United States as citizens. The idea I had then was a little different from that of other Japanese. Since I believed that Japan would be defeated in the war, I thought Japanese in the United States would be treated badly in the postwar unless they declared their loyalty to the country. The difference between my idea and other Japanese's idea was that I believed from the beginning Japan had no chance of winning the war. I assumed that Japanese would be discriminated much more even if the peace was achieved unless they declare their loyalty to the country as citizens. I thought we would be able to insist our rights as a citizen if we pledged ourselves to our allegiance to the country.

Q: Were you the only one who had such an idea?

A: I guess so. Some school teachers were educated in Japan and some of them had even military training in Japan. Although they were educators, they still believed in Japan's victory in the war. I told them it was their right to believe in their ideas but I also told them that I did not think Japan had no chance of winning the war and made it clear that we would not be able to assert our rights as citizens later unless we pledged ourselves to our allegiance to the United States. Most of the teachers who taught Japanese to officers did not share my idea. Particularly

kibei Japanese did not.

Q: Were the teachers all Japanese?

A: Yes, they were.

Q: How many teachers were there all together?

A: There were fifty teachers at its peak. Since you were very young then, I assume you did not know much about the war. According the U.S. military strategy her victory in the war was assumed from the beginning. At the University of Michigan the officers in the army learned languages and the officers in the navy received their language training in Denver. At that time ten major universities offered special Japanese language program. Those universities included Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Michigan, Stanford, Calif., Univ. of Washington, etc. Some Niseis and missionaries who returned from Japan became teachers. It was six-months program, called Army Service Training Core. They trained a lot of soldiers who went to Japan in the occupation forces. M.I.T. - Military Intelligence Core trained officers who later became leaders in major cities. As the U.S. government believed in their victory from the beginning, they had to train people, preparing for the postwar period. In Japan the government did not allow her people to learn English once the war started. In the United States, however, people started learning Japanese soon after the war started. The way Americans thought was very different. For about three years after the war the occupation forces had an office in each capital city of all the prefecturers in Japan and the prefectural government had to receive their permission to do anything. Americans who served

as sort of governors in each prefecture were those officers trained either at the University of Michigan or in Denver.

Q: How long did you teach at Michigan?

A: I taught Japanese there for about three years.

Q: What did you do after that?

A: With the order from the government I went to Japan immediately. I did translation and some interpreting in the occupation forces. I was in Japan for two years. Then I came back to the United States and started my previous work as an accountant.

Q: Was it in Pasadena?

A: No, my office was in Los Angeles, the same place.

Q: When did you come back to the United States?

A: It was 1947.

Q: Did you have any trouble in coming back?

A: None. I had some trouble before coming back. It was from 1945 to 1946. It was the question of whether those who had been relocated should be allowed to go back to where they came from. People were allowed to leave the camp from January, 1945, although the law was already enacted in September of previous year. They gave us identification cards before January 1945 and told us that the government would give us an official permission to return if we brought our identification cards to them. Our photographs and fingerprints were on these cards. It was just the government's policy and we were still called as Japs. When the first Japanese family went back to Pasadena, the family who received this Japanese family were harrassed. Somebody wrote some unpleasant things on their garage door, etc. At that time,

too, the church became a major force for accepting returning Japanese. The church accommodated them, helped them to find jobs and housing. Neighbors still looked angrily at the families who accepted Japanese families.

Q: We have to go back a little bit but I like to ask you what kind of things you knew about picture brides. I understand there are a lot of stories about them.

A: I heard some cases in which Japanese men who went to meet their brides at the port were disappointed with their brides because they looked different from the way they looked in the pictures. Some people insisted that they could not receive their brides because of this. Sometimes their friends had to persuade those bridegrooms to accept their picture brides. People in San Francisco knew all sorts of things in regard to picture brides. I also heard some stories from those who came from Japan as picture brides. In some cases Japanese men must have given their prospective brides an impression that they were rich. Thus their brides were disappointed with their husbands when they learned that they were not rich at all. One woman received a picture of her prospective husbands nice, fine store but she soon found out this store was somebody else's once she came over here. I heard her saying, "I can't help it." Thus, I have heard a lot of stories but I was never personally involved in any case.

Q: Was there any incidence that some of those women who came here as picture brides were sold as prostitutes?

A: There might have been such an incidence but I think it rarely

happened. It might have been possible earlier. There were some women who smuggled into the country earlier. I heard the story that some Japanese man went to Japan and playing a trick, brought some women back to the United States and sold them as prostitutes. However, I have no idea who did such a thing.

Q: You have struggled with various difficulties and received college education on your own. What would you like to say to sanseis?

A: If they learn a little more about those difficulties which isseis have struggled with, their ideas might change somewhat. It is important for them to know that they can be as they are today is really due to what their grandparents struggled through. I am afraid that they are not interested in learning this. I think Niseis, too, suffered with us, isseis. Some Japanese farmers had a hard time. Sometimes the cost of producing was higher than what they could earn by selling their products. The children of those farmers did not even have a pair of shoes to wear to go to church. San seis do not know much about these experiences. That's why I feel they take everything for granted.

Q: If sanseis studied about isseis, what kind of changes do you think would take place?

A: I don't know what the change would be like but I feel if they learned that their present life is largely due to the hardships isseis had gone through, it would somehow affect their thinking about their life. I don't know what they would think. It is what they would think. I think knowing about isseis' experiences would bring some change to the thoughts of sanseis. If it would

not affect their thinking, we cannot help it.

Q: Among what isseis did, what kind of thing do you think was important?

A: I think it was that as pioneers they layed a foundation with their own efforts. Their efforts were fulfilled. Isseis' efforts and hardships they went through are at the very basis of the prosperity Japanese can enjoy today or the fact that J Japanese-Americans have come a long way to present situation. Their tears and sweat lie at the bottom.

Q: I guess the credit isseis won is very important, particularly with caucasians.

A: Some bankman says that if it is a Japanese signature, there's no problem. I have had a lot of dealings with Bank of California and First Security National Bank. Those who work in loan department at these banks know it very well because Japanese always make payments on or by due date. I know a person who has an employment agency. He told me that if he sent a Japanese clerk or secretary in response to the requests made by private business offices of government agencies they would hire this Japanese even without an interview. I think niseis and sanseis, too, are capable of doing a good job while some caucasians tend to brag their abilities when they are not that capable. Japanese are honest in general. That's why companies do not bother to interview Japanese applicants. I'm not sure if sanseis, too, would be treated like this. Japanese are that reliable. I frequently tell blacks and Mexicans that it is important to

attain one's rights and positions with one's own strength and efforts as Japanese have done but it is something different to do so with violence. That's why I tell blacks that they have to build up themselves and be able to do the same work as others do. Then they can assert their rights. Our society would not make any progress if people demand their rights without fulfilling their duties. I take a pride in that Japanese have set an example to other minority group members. I think if other minority group members had modeled after Japanese, more than half of our social problems would be solved.